

May 2013 Newsletter

CIRM May Newsletter

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In Memoriam: Robert G. Edwards, Father of IVF



(photo: Bourn Hall)

Bob Edwards, who won the 2010 Nobel Prize in Medicine for the development of in vitro fertilization (IVF), passed away on April 10th. Edwards' pioneering IVF work led to the birth of the first test-tube baby, Louise Brown, in 1978. This achievement enabled advancements that led to the discoveries of embryonic stem cells and induced pluripotent stem cells. CIRM President Alan Trounson, a colleague and friend, reflected on Edward's life and his contributions to humanity.

- [Read President Trounson's blog](#)

New Videos: Staying on the Critical Path Workshop

Avoiding “bumps” in the pathway

CIRM



AP / Danton Diergen

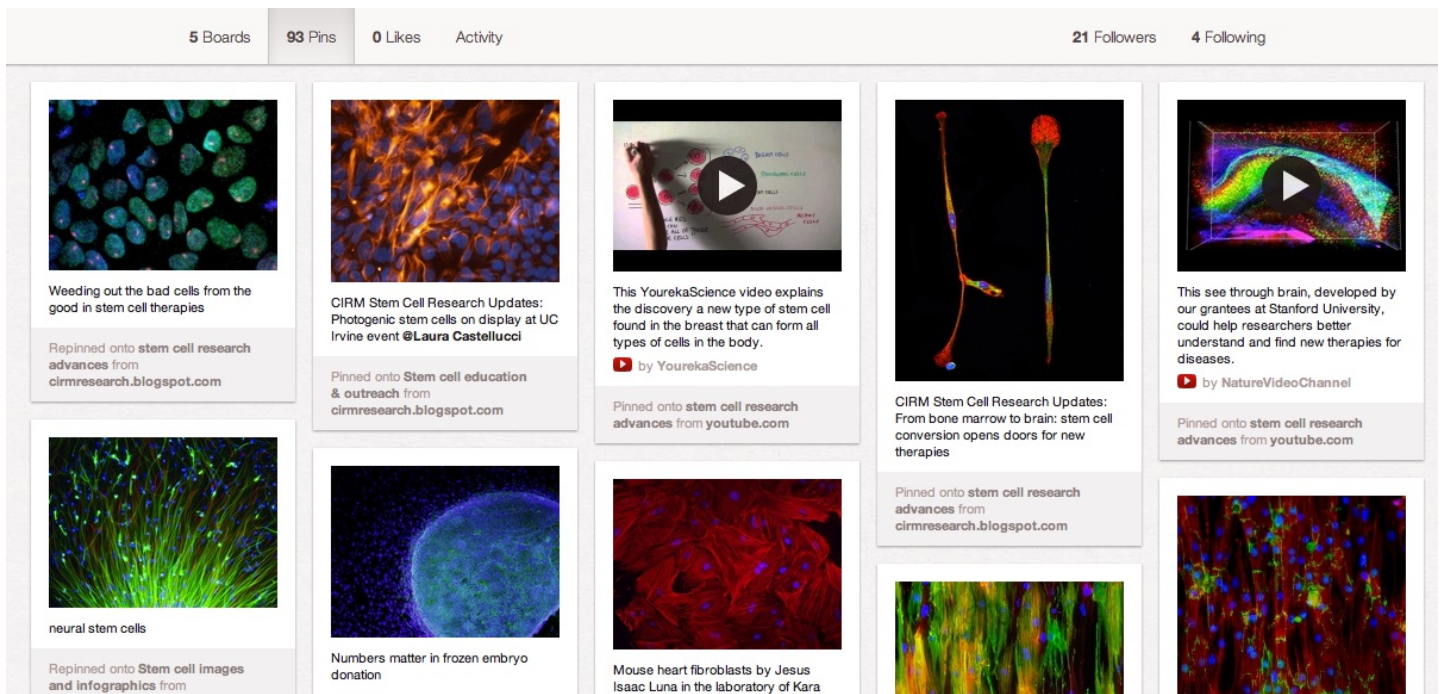
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At the March 6-8, 2013 CIRM Grantee Meeting, Senior VP of R&D Ellen Feigal held a workshop for CIRM grantees to help them increase their understanding of the pathway to develop a stem cell-based product for patients. Speakers Keith Wells and Joy Cavagnaro provided advice about anticipating the manufacturing and regulatory issues and optimizing pre-clinical studies for stem cell-based products which present added challenges for CIRM-funded projects since many represent novel therapeutic approaches that have never been tried in humans. In addition, several clinical trial experts from the United Kingdom spoke to raise awareness about opportunities for California researchers to collaborate on clinical trials with the U.K. Videos of the presentations are now available.

- Watch the workshop videos

CIRM is Now on Pinterest!





As of April, CIRM is now on Pinterest! As its company states, Pinterest is "a tool for collecting and organizing things you love." We love images, videos, and stories about stem cells so check out our Pinterest boards and share our stories of progress on your own boards.

- Visit our Pinterest board

Stephen Hawking Visits CIRM-Funded Cedars-Sinai Lab

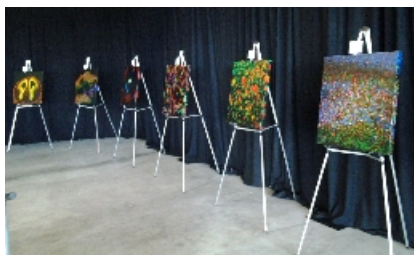


(photo: Eric Reed, Cedars-Sinai)

On April 9th, famed British physicist Stephen Hawking toured the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center to visit with researchers working on possible therapies for ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. Hawking has suffered from the disease for 50 years. During the tour, he visited a CIRM-funded team led by Clive Svendsen that plans to genetically modify nerve stem cells to produce a protein that seems to be able to protect nerves from further damage by the disease. They hope to begin a trial with the therapy within the next couple years.

- Read our blog about Hawking's visit

Photogenic Stem Cells on Display at UC Irvine Art Show



(photo: UCI Stem Cell Research Center)

On the evening of April 25th, the Sue and Bill Gross Stem Cell Research Center at UC Irvine organized an art reception to commemorate the addition of a fourth floor to its research building. The extra floor will provide space for three additional stem cell labs working toward new disease therapies. The event lined up 24 stem cell images around the periphery of the space that will soon occupy the new labs. Each lab in the three floors below contributed entries to the art show.

- [Read our blog about the art show](#)
- [View the stem cell artwork on Flickr](#)

CIRM President Alan Trounson's Stem Cell Research Picks

Each month CIRM President Alan Trounson reports on advances in stem cell science by highlighting recently published papers from CIRM grantees and other leading research teams around the world. His April picks include two publications related to diabetes research: a team at the University of Milan developed a virus-free technique for direct reprogramming of human skin cells into pancreatic cells that produce insulin while Doug Melton's lab at Harvard identified a hormone that can increase production of insulin-secreting pancreatic beta cells 30 fold. Another Harvard team reported on the application of tissue engineering techniques to create a kidney in the lab, which produced urine when transplanted it into a rat.

- [Read about all the president's picks in his report](#)
- [Browse the president's stem cell picks archive](#)

1300 and Counting: The Latest Publications on CIRM-funded Research

With over 1300 published discoveries, CIRM grantees are making steady progress on understanding the molecular basis of stem cell biology and moving stem cell-based therapies toward clinical trials. Here is a partial list of science journals that published CIRM-funded research in April along with press releases from the grantees' home institutions and entries from the CIRM Stem Cell Research Blog:

April 8th - *Current Biology*

- [UC Davis Press Release: Opposites attract: How cells and cell fragments move in electric fields \(VIDEO\)](#)
- [CIRM Blog: Guiding stem cell migration to heal wounds](#)

April 10th - *Nature*

- [Stanford Press Release: Getting CLARITY: Hydrogel process developed at Stanford creates transparent brain](#)
- [CIRM Blog: Most awesome video ever dives and swoops through the structures of an actual brain](#)

April 11th - *Cell Stem Cell*

- [UCSF Press Release: Brain Development Is Guided by Junk DNA that Isn't Really Junk](#)
- [CIRM Blog: Clever use for cellular junk: building the brain](#)

April 14th - *Nature Biotechnology*

- [Stanford Press Release: Researchers turn skin cells directly into the cells that insulate neurons](#)
- [CIRM Blog: Presto chango: skin cells converted into cells that could treat MS and other conditions](#)
- [San Francisco Business Times article: Stanford stem cell research offers new hope for multiple sclerosis patients](#)

April 15th - *Development Cell*

- UCLA Press Release: Method makes it easier to separate useful stem cells from 'problem' ones for therapies
- CIRM Blog: Weeding out the bad cells from the good in stem cell therapies

Upcoming CIRM Events

May 23rd: The CIRM governing board will hold its 3rd meeting of 2013 at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley. The agenda and details will be posted to the **meetings page** 10 days before the event.

CIRM Funding Opportunities

RFA 13-01: CIRM Disease Team Therapy Development Awards III - Applications due 5:00 pm (PDT), May 15, 2013. Only those applicants that submitted a letter of intent (LOI) that was accepted by CIRM may submit an application. Applicants will be notified if their LOI was NOT accepted. CIRM conducted a webinar on Wednesday February 6, 2013 to provide information regarding RFA 13-01 including tips to potential applicants, an overview of the application process and questions from applicants. Click [here](#) to review the archived materials from this webinar.

RFA 13-02: CIRM Basic Biology Awards V - Invitations for Full Applications will be sent out May 24, 2013. Only accepted from applicants who submitted a Preliminary Application.

PA 12-08: CIRM Patent Assistance Fund Awards - Application opportunities on a monthly basis until June 30, 2014

Eligibility: Only Technology Transfer Officials at current CIRM Grantee institutions are eligible to apply for funds under this program.

Get more info about CIRM RFAs

Sign up to receive CIRM funding announcements

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